

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend Claims 4, 7, 15 and 18 to read as follows.

1.-3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) An inkjet printing method using a printing head having a plurality of nozzles capable of ejecting ink for printing an image by ejecting ink based on printing data which instructs ejection or non-ejection of ink, the plurality of nozzles being aligned next to each other along a predetermined direction, the image being completely printed in a predetermined area of a printing medium by a single movement of the printing head relative to the printing medium while ink is ejected from the nozzles of the printing head based on the printing data, wherein

the printing data corresponding to an abnormal nozzle malfunctioning in ink-ejection is added to the printing data corresponding to a neighboring nozzle of the abnormal nozzle, based on a landing state of ink ejected from the neighboring nozzle,

when an N-th nozzle of the plurality of nozzles is an abnormal nozzle, a neighboring printing area neighboring a printing area to be printed by the N-th abnormal nozzle is printed by using an (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and an (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle (where N and M are positive integers) arranged in the neighborhood of the N-th abnormal nozzle based on the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle,

the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle is added to the printing data corresponding to the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle,

a ratio of the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle to be added to the printing data corresponding to the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle is determined based on landing states of the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle,

the landing state is a landing state of ink ejected from the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle, and obtained from at least one of information about deviation of a landing position of ink on the printing medium from a normal landing position and information about a diameter of a dot formed by ink landed on the printing medium, and

when one of the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle has a better landing state ~~worse~~ than ~~normal~~ the other, the ratio of the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle to be added to the printing data corresponding to the one neighboring nozzle is higher ~~lower~~ than that of the other neighboring nozzle.

5. (Previously Presented) An inkjet printing method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the states of the neighboring nozzles are obtained from ejection information based on landing results of ink ejected from the neighboring nozzles on the printing medium.

6. (Previously Presented) An inkjet printing method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the ejection information includes at least one of information about the landing positions of ink on the printing medium and the diameters of dots formed by ink landed on the printing medium.

7. (Currently Amended) An inkjet printing method using a printing head having a plurality of nozzles capable of ejecting ink for printing an image by ejecting ink based on printing data which instructs ejection or non-ejection of ink, the plurality of nozzles being aligned next to each other along a predetermined direction, the printing head being driven based on the printing data to eject ink, wherein

the printing data corresponding to an abnormal nozzle malfunctioning in ink-ejection is added to the printing data corresponding to a neighboring nozzle of the abnormal nozzle,

when an N-th nozzle of the plurality of nozzles is an abnormal nozzle, a neighboring printing area neighboring a printing area to be printed by the N-th abnormal nozzle is printed by using an (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and an (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle (where N and M are positive integers) arranged in the neighborhood of the N-th abnormal nozzle based on the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle, and

when the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle is added to that corresponding to the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle, a driving frequency for ejecting ink from the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th

neighboring nozzle is increased by 2 times, the driving drive frequency being a frequency for driving the printing head to eject ink in performing the printing and being defined by a number of times the plurality of nozzles in the printing head are drivable during a predetermined period, timings of ink ejection performed based on ~~an~~ original printing data corresponding to the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle ~~are~~ being shifted from timings of ink ejection performed based on the printing data added to the printing data corresponding to the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle.

8.-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) An inkjet printing apparatus using a printing head having a plurality of nozzles capable of ejecting ink for printing an image by ejecting ink based on printing data which instructs ejection or non-ejection of ink, the plurality of nozzles being aligned next to each other along a predetermined direction, the image being completely printed in a predetermined area of a printing medium by a single movement of the printing head relative to the printing medium while ink is ejected from the nozzles of the printing head based on the printing data, comprising:

compensation means for adding the printing data corresponding to an abnormal nozzle malfunctioning in ink-ejection to the printing data corresponding to a neighboring nozzle of the abnormal nozzle, based on a landing state of ink ejected from the neighboring nozzle,

wherein when an N-th nozzle of the plurality of nozzles is an abnormal nozzle, a neighboring printing area neighboring a printing area to be printed by the N-th abnormal nozzle is printed by using an (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and an (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle (where N and M are positive integers) arranged in the neighborhood of the N-th abnormal nozzle based on the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle,

the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle is added to the printing data corresponding to the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle,

said compensation means determines a ratio of the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle to be added to the printing data corresponding to the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle based on the landing states of the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle,

the landing state is a landing state of ink ejected from the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle, and obtained from at least one of information about deviation of a landing position of ink on the printing medium from a normal landing position and information about a diameter of a dot formed by ink landed on the printing medium, and

when one of the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle has a better landing state ~~worse~~ than ~~normal~~ the other, the ratio of the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle to be added to the printing data corresponding to the one neighboring nozzle is ~~lower~~ higher than that of the other neighboring nozzle.

16. (Previously Presented) An inkjet printing apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein

the states of the neighboring nozzles are obtained from ejection information of ink ejected from the neighboring nozzles and landed on the printing medium.

17. (Previously Presented) An inkjet printing apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein

the ejection information includes at least one of data about the landing positions of ink on the printing medium and the diameters of dots formed by ink landed on the printing medium.

18. (Currently Amended) An inkjet printing apparatus using a printing head having a plurality of nozzles capable of ejecting ink for printing an image by ejecting ink based on printing data which instructs ejection or non-ejection of ink, the plurality of nozzles being aligned next to each other along a predetermined direction, the printing head being driven based on the printing data to eject ink, comprising:

compensation means for adding the printing data corresponding to an abnormal nozzle malfunctioning in ink-ejection to the printing data corresponding to a neighboring nozzle of the abnormal nozzle, wherein when an N-th nozzle of the plurality of nozzles is an abnormal nozzle, a neighboring printing area neighboring a printing area to be printed by the N-th abnormal nozzle is printed by using an (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and an (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle (where

N and M are positive integers) arranged in the neighborhood of the N-th abnormal nozzle based on the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle; and

means for, when the printing data corresponding to the N-th abnormal nozzle is added to that corresponding to the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle, increasing a driving frequency for ejecting ink from the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle by 2 times, the ~~drive~~ driving frequency being a frequency for driving the printing head to eject ink in performing the printing and being defined by the number of times the plurality of nozzles in the printing head are drivable during a predetermined period, timings of ink ejection performed based on ~~an~~ original printing data corresponding to the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle ~~are~~ being shifted from timings of ink ejection performed based on the printing data added to the printing data corresponding to the (N-M)-th neighboring nozzle and the (N+M)-th neighboring nozzle.

19.-22. (Cancelled)